

Remarks for Ambassador Pamela A. White
4th of July Celebration
July 3, 2013
Ambassador's Residence

His Excellency, President of the National Assembly Dieuseul Simon
Desras,

His Excellency, Prime Minister Laurent Lamothe,

Members of the Parliament,

Government representatives,

Members of the Diplomatic Corps,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Dear friends,

Please allow me to express my deep gratitude to all the sponsors who
have made this evening possible. I would like to thank Citibank,
GLF, Hertz, Newmont, Seaboard Marine of Haiti, IBC Airways,
ADEKO, AmCham Haiti, Unibank, Alternative Insurance Company,

CINA, Panexus, Sol, Digicel, Sogebank, E-Power, Rhum
Barbancourt, Brana, and Culligan.

And now, I would like to thank you all for joining us to celebrate our country's 237th birthday. When I look around I realize we have so much to celebrate.

We have the incredible accomplishments of the past three years to celebrate,

We have the progress we are making every day to celebrate,

We have the foundations of a wonderful future to celebrate.

Listen, I have been around the developing world for more than 35 years. My eyes are wide open.

I KNOW that not everything is perfect here in Haiti.

I KNOW there is too much corruption in Haiti,

I KNOW that Haiti needs to increase access to healthcare and higher education,

I KNOW we have too many people who are food insecure and too few professionals to staff Haiti's hospitals and schools and ministries.

Haiti must also grow private enterprises and get more people to work.

So yes, I admit there are serious problems that must be tackled. But have any of you ever lived in a place that was more willing to take on a challenge – even a huge challenge? If there is one lesson that the Haitian people have taught me (and I am talking about those women selling griot on the street, those men clearing fields with handmade hoes, those children dancing to school with their multi-colored ribbons)

THOSE Haitians have taught all of us a simple lesson: “**Rozo pliye, men li pa janm kase.**” (Rozo (tree) bent, never breaks) If you are pushed down HARD by a person or a storm or an earthquake – you have ONE choice. GET BACK UP.

The Haitian people are an inspiration to me each and every day.
I GET BACK UP because of them.

THANK you for that, people of Haiti.

I know that not everyone sees things the way I do. I think it is not what you look at but what you see.

I know that some see 325,000 people living in tents, I see 1.2 million people NOT living in tents.

Some look at Haiti and see illiteracy – while I see over a million new school children in school this past year – over 80% of the young people in this country are getting an education for the first time in decades.

Some people see a weak health system. I see 45,000 people living with HIV on anti-retroviral treatment provided by the US Government. I see 90% of the HIV+ pregnant women getting anti-retroviral therapy drugs to prevent transmission to their unborn children. I see at least 85% of children being vaccinated against measles; I see a strong fight against lymphatic filariasis that will eliminate it in five years. I see hospitals and clinics being built and health professionals being trained. I see fifty percent of the Haitian population being served by around 300 US Government-funded healthcare sites. I also see my Government paying salaries for 6,000 healthcare staff. Since the earthquake, 20 clinics have been renovated by the U.S. Government. Last year alone 1,000 nurses and 300 doctors graduated from schools in Haiti.

Some people see a country battered by natural disasters. What they don't see is a vastly improved network of people working together with the Direction de la Protection Civile that last year provided warnings and shelter which literally saved thousands of lives. Eleven new fire houses are being built, fire fighters and emergency medics trained and fire trucks equipped. The National EOC (Centre d' Operations d'Urgence Nationale or COUN) is up and running and there are 10 Civile Centre d' Operations d'Urgence Departmentale, (regional emergency operations centers) ready to be turned over to the Haitian government which will provide even better protection against natural disasters.

Some people see Haiti on the verge of famine, I see a country committed to developing its agriculture, with the government pledging to plant 50 million trees this year and double its forest cover by 2016. Since 2010, corn production has increased by 300 percent

and beans by 85 percent as a result of Feed the Future interventions in the Cul de Sac and Matheux areas.

Some people see the difficulty of travel in Haiti; I see the 200 kilometers of rural feeder roads to be rehabilitated, a new airport in Cap Haitien that will soon be welcoming tourists directly from Miami, and the contract to rebuild the port in Port au Prince.

Some people see only the crime on the streets of Port au Prince, without recognizing the increased presence and professionalism of the Haitian National Police. Right now there are over 1,000 dedicated young men AND Women, who are training to provide security to the people of Haiti. Seven officers have given their lives in defense of their fellow citizens; these are the true heroes of modern Haiti.

Some people look at Haiti and see a poor country, I see Haiti as one of the richest countries on earth. Look around you, everywhere you turn

you see its vibrant culture, its rich history, its diversity, natural beauty and welcoming people.

Some people look at Haiti and see hopelessness; I look and see a better future, a brighter future.

The United States is committed to working with Haiti to reach that future. Just as tonight we celebrate our birthday, there will be many nights of celebration to come.

We will celebrate the education of the youth of Haiti,

We will celebrate the geniuses of Haiti taking their place in the fields of science, art, music, literature,

We will celebrate the people of Haiti being fed through the hard work of its proud farmers, and Haiti's rich fields,

And we will celebrate the people of Haiti being led by the fair, transparent government they have elected.

There's a Haitian proverb that says: “**Men ale, men vini, zanmi dire**” (When there are exchanges, friendship will last)

These are all good reasons to celebrate.

Nan bonjan lang kreyòl-la: “**An nou selebre!**” ("Let's celebrate!")

Thank you for joining me tonight as we celebrate my country's 237th birthday, and also celebrate a brighter future for our two beloved countries!